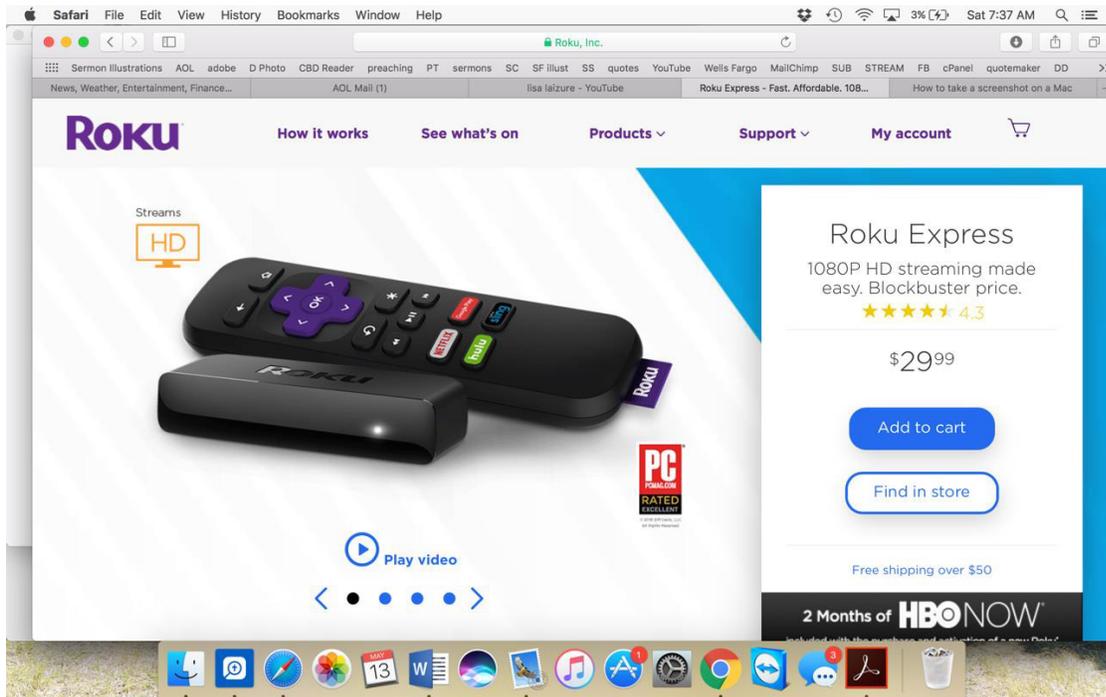


# Acts Lesson 18 Handout



## Matthew 7:24–27

**24** “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

**25** The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

**26** But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

**27** The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

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## Acts 5:12–16

**12** The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon’s Colonnade.

**13 No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people.**

**14 Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.**

**15 As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by.**

**16 Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.**

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**2 Timothy 4:3-4**

**3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.**

**4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.**

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**Daniel Hans is a Presbyterian minister in the United States. In 1986 he and his wife Beth lost their three year old daughter Laura to cancer.**

**Daniel and Beth watched in agony as their little girl faced nine hospitalizations and four separate operations in the last nine months of her life. Their hearts broke as they watched Laura die, and they struggled to make sense of what had happened.**

**In 1987 Daniel Hans released a book containing some of the sermons he preached throughout his daughter's battle with cancer and in the period immediately after her death. One of them is titled: "Caution. Your God is Too Big."**

**Hans relates how he once surveyed his congregation, asking them about their disappointments with God. He asked them to share things they had hoped God would do but that God didn't. People described times they had prayed for the life of a newborn child only to see it die, of the hope God would protect his people from violence only to hear of an elderly woman being stabbed on her way to church, prayed for rain for famine stricken Africa only to see starvation continue. To these disappointments Hans now added his own – he had hoped God would heal his baby girl, but her condition only grew worse.**

**Hans suggests that disappointments like these are the stuff of life, and that if we read the Scriptures we discover that alongside the stories of miracles and amazing feats by God we hear story after story of disappointment with God, of times God appears silent and inactive.**

**He suggests that sometimes we remember only the miracle stories and so we develop too big a view of God – not that we can have too big a view of God's greatness and power or too big a view of God's love and grace, but that we can have too big a view of God's will.**

**God's action in our world is not always to perform the miraculous, but more often than not to walk through our suffering with us.**

**Hans suggests that "A view of God that is too big is harmful both to believer and unbeliever. When our understanding of God is exaggerated, we declare that God will do things he does not intend to do, at least not regularly and in all situations."**

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**The only way to keep your health is to eat what you don't want, drink what you don't like and do what you'd rather not.**

**Mark Twain.**

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**Matthew 4:23**

**23 And He went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the good news (Gospel) of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every weakness and infirmity among the people (demonstrating and revealing that He was indeed the promised Messiah)**

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**Daniel 3:17-18**

**17 "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king.**

**18 "But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."**

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**JONI ERICKSON TADA: "I prayed for healing and truly believed it would come. The Bible speaks of our bodies' being glorified'. Now I realize I will be healed; I'm just going through a forty or fifty-year delay, and God stays with me even through that."**

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**Philip Yancey – PRAYER – DOES IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE?**

**I cannot, nor can anyone, promise that prayer will solve all problems and eliminate all suffering. At the same time, I also know that Jesus commanded His followers to pray,**

**certain that it makes a difference in a world full of opposition to God's will.**

**For whatever reason, God now tolerates a world in which fathers abuse their physically disabled sons, children live with congenital birth defects, breast cancer metastasize, and distressed young people commit suicide. Why does God so rarely step in and bring miraculous intervention to our requests? Why is suffering distributed so randomly and unfairly? No one knows the complete answer to those questions. For a time, God has chosen to operate on this broken planet mostly from the bottom up rather than from the top down – a pattern God's own Son subjected Himself to while on earth.**